



## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

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Project Number: 3016369

Address: 743 N 35th Street

Applicant: Bradley Khouri, B9 Architects

Date of Meeting: Monday, April 28, 2014

Board Members Present: Ellen Cecil (Chair)  
Marc Angelillo  
Jerry Coburn  
Dale Kutzera

Board Members Absent: David Neiman, Recused

DPD Staff Present: Lindsay King

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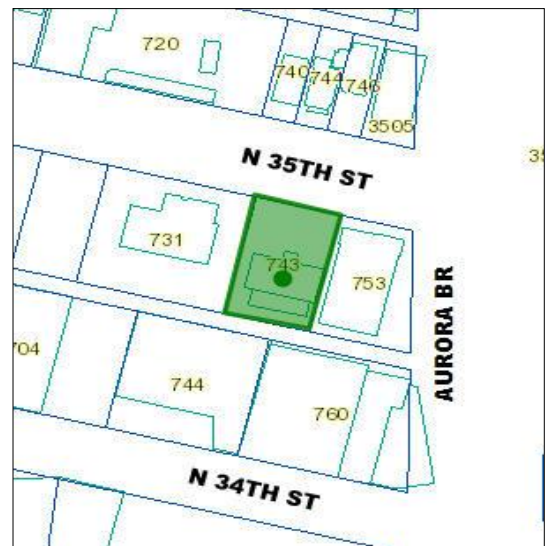
### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial  
Three (NC3-40)

Nearby Zones: North: LR2  
South: NC3-65  
East: NC3-40  
West: NC3-40

Lot Area: 9,314 sq. ft.

Current Development: Office building.



**Surrounding Development:** The subject site is located midblock on the south side of N 35th Street between Aurora Ave N and Fremont Ave N. The subject lot and lots to the east and west are zoned Neighborhood Commercial Three (NC3-40). Lots to the south are zoned Neighborhood Commercial Three with a sixty five foot height limit (NC3-65). Lots to the north are zoned Lowrise Two (LR2) multifamily. The site contains one parcel with an existing one story office building. To the west is the Fremont Public Library, a City of Seattle Landmark structure. The library parcel also contains an existing Exceptional Tree located along the shared property line. The site contains an approximately 27 foot grade change from the north to south property line. To the north are existing single family and multifamily structures. To the east is an existing two story commercial structure. To the south across the alley is one story warehouse structure.

**ECAs:** Steep Slope.

**Neighborhood Character:** This neighborhood, located within the Fremont Hub Urban Village, includes multifamily housing, community services, restaurants and shopping. One block to the west is Fremont Avenue N which is a major vehicular, transit and pedestrian hub. Fremont Avenue N contains a number of multi-story multifamily mixed use structures and one story commercial structures. Directly to the west is the one story Fremont Library, a designated City of Seattle Landmark structure. One lot to east is the Aurora Bridge, a landmark structure, which includes the Fremont Troll. Uses along N 35<sup>th</sup> Street are varied and include single family homes, multifamily apartment buildings, multi-story mixed used building and commercial structures and the landmark Fremont Library. Zoning along N 385<sup>th</sup> Street is primarily Neighborhood Commercial Three with a forty foot height limit (NC3-40). However, the majority of buildings are between one and two stories with a few 3 and four story structures. Within walking distance from the site, services include a restaurants, grocery stores, shopping, library and parks. Natural amenities in the area include Lake Union.

Fremont Avenue N is a major Metro bus corridor providing service from Downtown Seattle to many districts north of Lake Union. The Burke Gilman Trail is located one block to the south providing pedestrian and bicycle service to the University of Washington and Ballard with connections to multiple locations. N 35<sup>th</sup> Street is designated as collector arterial Street.

NE 35<sup>th</sup> Street is characterized by one to four story multifamily, mixed use and commercial structures with generous street setbacks containing mature vegetation.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance application proposing a six story structure containing ground level commercial with 56 residential units above and below grade parking for 25 vehicles. The existing structure will be demolished.

The project includes a contract rezone to change the height of the allowed zoning from forty feet to sixty five feet.

### EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: April 28, 2014

## DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3016369) at this website:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Review\\_Program/Project\\_Reviews/Reports/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp).

The EDG packet is also available to view in the project file (project number 3016369), by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

**Mailing**    **Public Resource Center**

**Address:** 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000  
P.O. Box 34019  
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:**    [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

## PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised during the public comment portion of the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Concerned about the scale and design of the frontage on 35th Street and the viability of the courtyard as a quasi-public space set back from the sidewalk.
- Felt the building was located too close to the street, creating additional shadows on the sidewalk.
- Requested more information about the scale of the building in relationship to the residential structures in the Lowrise zone across the street.
- Concerned about the building blocking sunlight for the structure to the north across the street.
- Concerned the proposed building will include large blank walls that will face directly to the west side of the structure to the east.

- Preferred the residential entries off the central courtyard to maintain privacy for the building to the east.
- Felt building will have enormous impact during construction.
- Felt the building will have a detrimental effect on the character of the neighborhood.
- Concerned about traffic and pavement in the alley.
- Concerned about the scale and design of the frontage on 35th street and the function of courtyard as a quasi-public space away from the sidewalk.

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines of highest priority for this project.

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**2. N 35<sup>th</sup> Street.** The Board felt Massing Option 3 provided the better design solution by providing the most successful ground plane design. The Board directed the applicant evolve the N 35<sup>th</sup> Street façade with the following guidance.

- a) The Board noted the ground level setback on N 35th Street and the substantial ground level transparency represented in the design concept were positive additions to the project. At the Recommendation Meeting the Board requested details showing the right-of-way landscape improvements, additional street setback, and first floor commercial treatment, and the entry to the semi-private courtyard space contribute and enhance the existing neighborhood character (PC1-A-2, PL2-B).
- b) The Board felt N 35<sup>th</sup> Street façade must evolve to provide a successful transition to the lower density lowrise residential uses across the street. The Board directed the applicant to review the adopted Design Guidelines, included CS2-D and DC-2, for direction on how to achieve an appropriate transition (CS2-D, DC2).
- c) The Board felt strongly that the street façade must include substantial modulation on the street facade, as represented in the packet and presentation, to mitigate the uniform six story street wall (CS2-D, DC2).

**4. East Façade.** The Board noted concern for the relationship of the six story building next to the existing two story office structure.

- a) The Board agreed that the proposed building must provide a better transition to the massing, scale and use of the existing structure to the east. The Board directed the applicant to review Height, Bulk and Scale Guidelines CS2-D and DC-2 to develop an appropriate response to the existing context. The Board noted that the transition may be achieved in a variety of ways and felt the applicant should develop an appropriate response (CS2-D, DC-2).

- b) The Board requested a privacy study in elevation views documenting existing windows whose privacy will be impacted by proposed development. The location of existing windows should inform the location of proposed windows. (CS2-D5).

**5. West Façade.** The Board focused guidance on the preferred massing option.

- a) The Board felt the design presented at the Recommendation meeting must have a better transition to the massing, scale and use of the existing structure to the west. The Board directed the applicant to review Height, Bulk and Scale Guidelines CS2-D and DC2 to develop an appropriate response to the existing context (CS2-D, DC-2).
- b) The Board directed the applicant to work with the Fremont Library to investigate whether the trash and recycling spaces may be treated to provide a visual extension of the plaza and public walkway on the subject lot (CS1-D, PL1-A-2, PL3-A-2).
- c) The Board would like to see a site section of showing the relationship of the proposed structure to the landmark structure and site, including the Exceptional Tree to demonstrate the relationship between the two buildings and the courtyard and the tree (CS1-C and CS1-D).
- d) The Board noted that the central courtyard space was integral to the success of the building concept. At Recommendation, the Board requested additional information about the treatment and programming of the space as a semi private space for use by residents. The Board felt the courtyard should be enlivened by the primary residential entry location and treatment (PL3-A-2).
- e) At the Recommendation Meeting the Board requested additional information and detail about the entry sequence and courtyard treatment including pavement, landscaping, lighting and signage (PL3-A-2).

**6. Alley Façade.** The Board felt the parking and back of house service location off the alley provided the better design solution.

- a) The Board felt the alley façade will benefit from the location of units which will bring eyes and residential life onto the alley (PL2-B).
- b) The Board would like to see more information at the Recommendation meeting on the treatment of the alley at ground level including the garage door and lighting and also the activation of that façade to respond to the context at that edge (PL2-B)

**7. Architectural Context and Materials.** The Board noted the proposed building is located within a neighborhood with a strong eclectic material and architectural character.

- a) The Board supported the proposed architectural concept which includes a more contemporary design consistent with the electric neighborhood character (CS3-A).
- b) The Board would like more information showing how the design parti and material application will reduce the scale of the building, particularly on the facades facing the north, east and west (DC2-A, B and D DC4-A).

## DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

## CONTEXT & SITE

**CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.**

**CS1-C Topography**

**CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes:** Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

**CS1-D Plants and Habitat**

**CS1-D-2. Off-Site Features:** Provide opportunities through design to connect to off-site habitats such as riparian corridors or existing urban forest corridors. Promote continuous habitat, where possible, and increase interconnected corridors of urban forest and habitat where possible.

**CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.**

**CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces**

**CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street:** Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

**CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale**

**CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning:** Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

**CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions:** For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

**CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites:** Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

**CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.**

**CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together:** Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

## PUBLIC LIFE

**PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.**

**PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life:** Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

**PL2-B Safety and Security**

**PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street:** Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

**PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety:** Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

**PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.**

**PL3-A Entries**

**PL3-A-2. Common Entries:** Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

**DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.**

**DC2-A Massing**

**DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass:** Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

**DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition**

**DC2-B-1. Façade Composition:** Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

**DC2-B-2. Blank Walls:** Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

**DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**

**DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest:** Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

**DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings:** Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

**DC2-D Scale and Texture**

**DC2-D-1. Human Scale:** Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept.

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

At the time of the Early Design Guidance no design review departures were requested.

**BOARD DIRECTION**

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.

